

*Quarterly*  
**NEWS**  
*Letter*

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VOL. XXX

*Winter 1964*

No. 1

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RARE BOOKS IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

By James D. Hart

HOW IT BEGAN:  
PRINTING IN RUSSIA

By Academician M. Tikhomirov

SERENDIPITY  
NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS :: EXHIBITIONS  
ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP  
£c. £c.

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San Francisco*

FOUNDED in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

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# The Book Club of California

## *Quarterly*

## *News-Letter*

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VOL. XXX

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### Rare Books in the Public Library

*by James D. Hart\**

**B**EFORE one can talk about rare books in the public library one should talk about the nature of rare books themselves, to find out what one means by them. It may be that one will find the very term is a misnomer because if the adjective is all right (actually, I'm not so certain about that), the noun is surely very questionable.

In this context the word "book" covers a multitude of forms of materials. One form is printed and bound texts. But another form is neither printed nor bound. It is the form of manuscripts. And manuscripts themselves can be divided into kinds. By manuscripts one can mean beautifully inscribed and illuminated pages

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\*James D. Hart is Professor of English at the University of California, and Chairman of The Book Club's Publications Committee. This address was delivered at the dedication ceremony of the San Francisco Public Library's Department of Rare Books and Special Collections on October 1.

## The Book Club of California

created before the era of printing. Equally well, by manuscripts one can mean ordinary pen and pencil writing, itself ranging from, say, the original drafts of works of literature to the daily jottings or the correspondence of business men that will help to illustrate the economic history of an industry or of a region. Then in this context "book" can mean material that isn't even on paper. It can mean, for example, a cuneiform clay tablet. And I suppose on the basis of other libraries' collections, although it is hardly my definition or desire, that the room which houses so-called rare books is the same one that gets locks of poets' hair.

If there is a large and diverse lot of things bundled together as books in the term "rare books," then presumably rarity is what they have as lowest common denominator. But what is rare and how long does it stay rare? What is rare should be that for which there is a very substantially greater demand than there is a supply. Yet sometimes this matter of supply and demand is very artificial because it goes by fads and fancies. I remember that in the 1920s everybody wanted limited editions, often no matter of what they were editions nor why they were limited. A limited first edition was a summum bonum because that was the time when everybody wanted first editions too. First editions of almost any author were thought to be desirable, but those of certain authors then peculiarly popular were in tremendous demand. So, for instance, a good copy of *Jocelyn*, an early novel by Galsworthy, sold for \$585.00 of the old-fashioned hard-money dollars at a sale in New York in 1929. In 1959 the same book sold for ten of our cheaper dollars. Well, Galsworthy is no longer considered an author of great consequence. But even first editions of books whose contents are as much esteemed today as ever they were, even such books have sometimes dropped in price.

A rare book doesn't necessarily stay rare then. Rare is not an absolute. It is at most only a comparative. And, troublesomely enough, it is not even clearly a comparative. One would assume that it could safely be said that a rare book is a book that is scarcer than books that are readily available. That is not necessarily so. A volume of sermons by a minister of the First Congregational Church of Peoria, Illinois, privately printed in 1912 at the expense of the minister's wife, is a book that may be excessively rare. But who cares? Nobody is trying to buy it. Nor, of course, is an

## Quarterly News-Letter

old book necessarily rare. Any number of incunabula are worth a lot less on the open market than a copy of Hemingway's first book, *Three Stories and Ten Poems*, issued in 1923. In part that is because the text and probably the character of printing of many incunabula are not more significant than the volume of sermons by my hypothetical Peoria divine. So rare books are neither simply scarce nor simply old books. They have to be more than that. They have to be desirable. And I should say they have to be desirable for substantial reasons, if they are going to remain rare. Books (or their first cousins in manuscript, etc.) that are wanted for meaningful reasons because of their contents can qualify for the term rare only if to obtain them requires a considerable expenditure of money, or time, or ingenuity or, most likely, all three commodities, of which money is the cheapest.

When there is an obvious reason to esteem the contents of a particular book, then that book is likely to be a candidate for rarity. And when it is assumed that a book will not long be readily procurable, then it too is a candidate for future rare book rooms. Such has always been the situation of that work we call the First Folio, as though there had not been endless folios before it. Actually the work is properly titled *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies. Histories, & Tragedies. Published according to the True Originall Copies*. It contains the first printing of seventeen of Shakespeare's plays, so it is the first edition for almost half his dramatic productions, as well as the first collected edition of the rest. Probably about a thousand copies were printed in 1623, certainly no fewer than six hundred. They were priced at £1 each, the unbound book therefore worth, say, \$50 according to the value of the currency of that day. A book so expensive would be well protected. It would be well treated too, simply because the text was appreciated. The result is that today about 230 copies of the First Folio are known. So anywhere from about a quarter to more than a third of an edition over three hundred years old survives for us and the future.

Now consider a book printed a few years after the First Folio, in 1640. Its title is *The Whole Book of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Metre*. Unlike the First Folio, it did not contain wholly new works of literature. Any number of editions of the Bible printed the Psalms in various versions and there were a good

## The Book Club of California

number of special issues or separate translations too. The authors of this collection are little known to literary history, for who would identify John Eliot, Richard Mather, and Thomas Weld? Nor is the translation distinguished as literature, in part because as John Cotton, the author of the introduction, put it, "God's altar wants not our polishing." But what makes this book interesting is that, except for an unpreserved broadside and a brief almanac, it is the first work printed in the American colonies, and it is moreover the first with any literary pretensions. Under the common title of *The Bay Psalm Book* it has come to be one of the great rarities. The book was popular in its own day and it was also common stuff. It was reprinted at least twenty-six times in the colonies and another twenty-nine times in the mother country within the next century and a half; that is, a new edition was required about every three-and-a-half years for a very, very long time. The first edition consisted of 1,700 copies (note how much larger it was than that of the First Folio) that were quite cheap, for the selling price was one shilling and eight pence. Of the first edition only eleven copies survive. I believe I am right in saying that they are all in libraries and therefore it seems that none will ever be sold again. Anyway, the one that went to Yale in the 1940s commanded the highest price ever paid for any rare book, if here by book we understand a printed and bound volume. Dr. Rosenbach bought it in 1947 for \$151,000, and one can assume that he made a little profit when he sold it to the donor, who presented it to Yale. Meanwhile the First Folio continues to be a rare book and a high-priced one, but by no means an astronomically rare one; and it is but a poor relative by comparison with its own younger country cousin, *The Bay Psalm Book*.

These two works provide an exaggerated instance of the common paradox that the rare book of today is often enough rare just because it was common yesterday. It is esteemed because it is an index of the culture of its times, so much welcomed originally that its early printings were literally read and dog-eared into shreds and out of existence. This suggests that the clever book collector is one who can spot what will be valuable (and I don't mean only in dollars) when it is both new and common. This is not likely to interest a private collector, for he can't wait around as long as an institution to see his judgment pay off; and anyway

## Quarterly News-Letter

he often enough wants to own many of the same works that his peers and competitors appreciate now, just as most art collectors today consider the stylish painters such as Picasso and Matisse to be the ones that they must have in their homes. But the library is, or should be, in a different position. It need not, it should not, collect to be prestigious. It should not collect for the sake of collecting. Private collectors generally build their libraries as a hobby; one might almost say they form collections as a kind of sport. For them book collecting involves the excitements of the hunt, the pleasures of competition, and the triumphs of winning over their competitors, or even, rarer yet, over the dealers. Now all this is good recreation and makes for some wonderful tales, such as have been told by A. Edward Newton and other bibliophiles, and such as are recited around good dinner tables like those that gather together members of the Roxburghe or the Zamorano or the Grolier clubs.

But what is the sport of the individual hunter should not be the business of the big library. The library can afford to play another game (it will likely inherit many of the private collectors' books anyway) and it has to have a different approach, even to some of the same works. The library should be logical; the private collector gets much of his fun out of being illogical. He has to collect, no matter whether it makes sense or not. In this context one thinks of a particularly flamboyant collector (and I choose my adjective carefully), Don Vincente, whose adventures inspired Flaubert's delightful and youthful tale, "Bibliomanie."

Don Vincente was a Spanish monk who took advantage of the political turmoil in his country during the 1830s to plunder the libraries of several old monasteries so as to satisfy his intense desire for rare books. But it was not this wholesale rifling that got him into trouble. It was his yearning for one particular book. He was fanatically determined to own the only known copy of *Furs e ordinacions*, the book printed in 1482 by Lamberto Palmart, Spain's first printer. His chance came when its owner died and his library was put up at auction. Don Vincente bid and bid to the very limit of his resources, and beyond. But the book went to an even richer, an even more intense bibliophile, Augustino Paxtot. A few nights later, Paxtot's house was consumed by fire and he himself was killed in the holocaust. The suspicious police

## The Book Club of California

went to Don Vincente's place and there they found the copy of *Furs e ordinacions*. In course of time Don Vincente was put on trial for arson and manslaughter, but the money that had not been spent on books was used to employ a very clever lawyer who made a very ingenious defense. By means of a remarkable search the lawyer discovered in Paris another copy of the *Furs e ordinacions*, and thereby contended that since nobody could prove that there might not be more copies around, nobody could prove that the copy found in his client's possession was necessarily the supposedly unique copy once owned by the late Augustino Paxtot; and so no connection could be established between Don Vincente and the mysterious Paxtot fire. This brilliant defense might have done very well had it not been revealed simultaneously to the courtroom and to Don Vincente himself. While the others in attendance were impressed by the logic, Don Vincente simply moaned and cried out, "Alas, alas! My copy is not unique." Don Vincente was executed at Barcelona in 1836.

In this instance the private bibliophile's passion for the unique and his desire to triumph over his competition went too far by quite a bit. However, I suggest that the public institution should stay clear of even the kind of collecting that is the province of the more conventional private bibliophile. It should not collect simply for the sake of collecting. It should not seek rarities merely because they are rarities, or appear to be so at the moment. It should prefer to preserve materials that individuals will be less likely to cherish, in part because they may seem too plain or to require too much space and special treatment, and it should have some good reasons for collecting them for users now and in the future. Of course a public library should have some display materials to show the general public, say, what a handsome book by the Grabhorn Press looks like. That press should be represented in the San Francisco Public Library both because it is creating some of the greatest typography of our time and because it is a beautiful expositor of the art and culture of this area. But I do not think the public needs to see all the books and pamphlets of the Grabhorn Press, great and little, and I do not think it is sensible at this date for still another library to attempt another such complete collection.

I hope the San Francisco Public Library will find its own areas

## Quarterly News-Letter

and that they will be ones appropriate to the public library of this city. It may indeed some day have holdings comparable to those housed in the public libraries of New York City and Boston and Philadelphia, three of the greatest rare book collections in the whole land. That would be fine. But to such a high goal it ought to proceed as sensibly as possible. In its beginnings the San Francisco Public Library has had the good sense and the good fortune to obtain collections not duplicated elsewhere in the Bay Region, like the Schmulowitz Collection of Wit and Humor and the Harrison Collection of Calligraphy and Lettering. I trust the Library will continue to discover its own areas and will not feel that because it has a lovely room that is stylish it must have lovely books that are stylish. I hope it will not move ahead simply by trying to imitate the most usual private bibliophile or the most conventional private collections, and I hope equally much that it will not simply dedicate itself to doing what is already done at neighboring universities and other established local institutions. Perhaps as it thinks of its location the San Francisco Public Library might decide that one of its fields could appropriately be the economic history of the city, for that seems to be one not yet fully cultivated by other institutions. The library might then attempt to gather the accumulated records of the great industries of San Francisco. Or, for another area, what about the ephemera that nobody thinks to gather? The political leaflets that are distributed by fringe groups are gone with the wind in a few hours. Yet the litter of today is sometimes the literature of tomorrow's research. Nowadays we treasure the broadsides of the American Revolution, whether or not they were works of a renowned figure like Tom Paine. We appreciate too the handbills of less tumultuous and more recent history, like those of the great fight between farmers and railroads in the Mussell Slough tragedy that formed the background of Frank Norris' *The Octopus* and that was so important in itself. But who is collecting the leaflets that will illuminate for the future historian the sit-ins that have occurred almost within the shadow of the Public Library and that will help to document the strife of civil rights? This is but the merest suggestion. It will not take much thought to extend the field.

Extend the suggestion as one may, it is not likely to satisfy the private collector's usual idea of rare books. For this usual idea

# The Book Club of California

there can be a place in the library, but a place that should be surrounded by more than the usual rare books. As I have indicated, I do not feel altogether happy with the term "rare books." I feel much easier with the words that you have added to the title of your new department. "Special Collections" is a good expression and it is happily a less aristocratic one. Only about fifty years ago such a department as this would probably have been called a Treasure Room. Fortunately we have got away from that snobbish and speciously sentimental terminology. We still speak of rare books but we need to be tough-minded about that term and to see the works it denominates not simply as museum pieces nor as works gathered mainly for reverence and awe. The San Francisco Public Library has indicated a wider view is possible by virtue of employing the double-barrelled designation, Rare Books and Special Collections, and that seems hopeful. Because it is hopeful and forward-looking, I am happy to have been able to take part in this dedication of what should become a meaningful collection.

## How It Began

### PRINTING IN RUSSIA

*by Academician M. Tikhomirov\**

THE words contained in books are veritably rivers filling the Universe as their depth is incalculable," said a philosopher in old Russia to praise the book in those distant years, when it was written by hand—a most long and painstaking task. The invention of printing was an epoch-making cultural

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\*This article first appeared in the Moscow newspaper *Izvestia* for March 12, 1964, and is reprinted by permission. The English translation was furnished through the kindness of the Press Department, Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Washington, D.C.

## Quarterly News-Letter

discovery, which pulled down the barriers limiting the circulation of those "words contained in books." They, indeed, came to fill the universe bringing the great achievements of learning and letters within reach of man.

Printing, which was rather widespread in Western Europe already in the fifteenth century, started to spread eastwards towards the close of the century. Its development was held back in some degree by the Cyrillic alphabet used in some countries. The Cyrillic alphabet was first used for printing in Poland; though the Poles themselves employ the Latin alphabet. The printing shop of Szwajpolt Feol was founded in 1491 in Cracow, then the Polish capital, and several religious books were published in the Slavonic language.

Shortly afterwards (in 1493) more books in Slavonic were printed, however, this time in Venice, a city that had commercial and cultural ties of long standing with the Slavonic countries. Subsequently, printing invaded the Slavonic countries, including Russia, in full force.

Russia at the time was quickly annexing more and more territory. It annexed the Kazan Khanate in 1552 and the Astrakhan Khanate a few years later. In this fashion Russia came to incorporate the entire Volga basin. It is this historical development, which in the afterword to the first printed edition of the "Gospel"—which saw light in 1564—is associated with the start of printing in Russia.

Russian chronicles have hardly any mention at all of the fact, as for that matter of many cultural developments. As we noticed, earlier mention is made only in the afterword to the "Gospel." We learn that the printing of the "Gospel" was started in the 30th year of Ivan the Terrible's reign—in 1563. The Imperial Printshop was built in the same year.

This printshop, which was located in Moscow, was from the very outset a state enterprise that functioned under the supervision of the supreme clerical authority, the Metropolitan of Moscow. Naturally, neither the tsar nor the Metropolitan had any practical connection with printing—which in Russia was started by those excellent printers Ivan Fyodorov and Pyotr Mstislavets.

Ivan Fyodorov's short biography has been traced with diffi-

## The Book Club of California

culty. He styled himself a Muscovite and we know that in the year of the "Gospel" 's printing he was deacon of the Church of St. Nicolas of Gestunsky in the Kremlin.

Ivan Fyodorov was apparently ordained to be a kind of editor who, knowing the text of the Holy Bible, would well avoid misprints. Actually he was interested not so much in the biblical text as in craftsmanship. Later on, already abroad, he demonstrated excellent skill. In afterwords to other books printed, he never termed himself a deacon.

We know still less about Pyotr Mstislavets. He is possibly of West Russian origin, as the town of Mstislavl lies in Smolensk Region.

The "Gospel," the first-ever printed Russian book, came out on March 1, 1564. Its printers had many obstacles to surmount. They picked for their model the Russian manuscripts of the time, which were written in the beautiful, clear hand typical of the mid-16th century. As was the custom, the text was not split up into separate words, being divided only by some peculiar marks of punctuation, full stops and commas. Some of the words were condensed.

The text of the "Gospel" was printed in two colors, black for the main body of it and vermilion for the headings and sundry marginal marks. Special care was taken to decorate the book, and the frontispieces of the various chapters are extremely beautiful.

The printing presses did not function in Moscow for long. For some tragic, as yet vague, reasons Ivan Fyodorov went abroad. It was claimed later that a mob had risen up against printing and set fire to the printshop—a version which apparently owes its origin to a man living much later, who sought to blacken Russian educational activities of the time.

At any rate printing, which had got onto such a successful start in Moscow, was now further developed in Russia, the Ukraine and the Byelorussia. After Moscow, Ivan Fyodorov and Pyotr Mstislavets founded a new printshop in Zabludov, in Byelorussia, where they put out two books. Then their ways divided. Ivan Fyodorov went to Lvov, where in 1574 he put out a new edition of the "Gospel" and also his "Primer." Later he printed books in Ostrog, where he produced the famous Ostrog Bible, a marvel-

## Quarterly News-Letter

lously done piece, and also other books. It was in Lvov that Fyodorov died.

After leaving Zabludov Pyotr Mstislavets settled in Vilnius, the capital of the Lithuanian Principality, where he produced several books reminiscent in type and decoration of the first books printed in Moscow.

In Russia itself the development of printing was only briefly interrupted. It was resumed already in 1568 in Moscow by the printers Nikifor Tarasiyev and Nevezha Timofeyev and carried forward by the latter's sons. In the reign of the tsar Fyodor and the tsar Boris Godunov, a goodly number of books were printed in Moscow and at times even in pretty large editions. Printers mostly followed the traditions of Ivan Fyodorov and Pyotr Mstislavets, introducing some improvements.

In the early seventeenth century, during the alien incursions on Russia and the Russian people's struggle for independence, the development of printing in Russia came to a halt for several years, however, to be resumed shortly after the interventionists were evicted from the country.

Henceforth, Moscow became a well-established center of printing and the Imperial Printshop was rebuilt on the old site. One can still see this seventeenth century piece of architecture, a wonderful relic of Moscow's educational activity, on the 25th of October Street. A wonderful view can be obtained of it over the top of the old sixteenth century wall (that still stands there) from the side of Sverdlov Square. In the seventeenth century the Moscow printshop was already a large-scale enterprise with its own printers and editors, some of whose names we know.

Most of the books printed were still of religious content, a tradition that was violated only in the early eighteenth century under Peter the Great, when a new civilian Russian alphabet was introduced to thus usher in a new stage in the printing of books in Russia.

# The Book Club of California

## *Second Book Auction*

THE SECOND SALE of the club's library duplicates and/or books no longer pertinent to the library's needs, was held Monday evening, October 19th. It was an unqualified success, the total for the 110 lots bringing within a few dollars of the three thousand mark. This was a bit higher than the very highest (and most optimistic) estimate.

The star piece of the sale was the folio *Dante* printed by the Ashendene Press (1909) in an edition of only 105 copies. It was knocked down for \$625.00, which is believed to be the best price this handsome book has ever brought at auction. Other fine press books did well, especially the Grabhorns, Doves, Daniels, and the publications of the Sacramento Book Collectors Club. In light of the extraordinary prices realized in the sale of Sir Rex Benson's collection of Kelmscotts, sold recently at Sotheby's in London, the half-dozen titles in our collection seem like bargains. The fortunate purchaser of William Morris' *The Story of the Glittering Plain*, the first book printed at the Kelmscott Press (1891), should be pleased to learn that the copy sold in London brought \$322.00, almost eight times what the club copy fetched. The same author's *Earthly Paradise* (8 volumes, 1896-97) brought \$168.00 at Sotheby's, \$57.50 in San Francisco.

As a contribution to the club's library fund, Miss Mabel Coulter presented a complete set of Book Club keepsakes to be sold at the auction. The set had been the property of her sister, the late Miss Edith Coulter, beloved teacher at the University of California and one-time member of the Book Club Board of Directors. This generous gesture was much appreciated, for the set brought \$225.00, a good if not startling price. Perhaps other members of the club may care to donate a book or two to the club's next sale. They will be welcomed by the library committee.

It is hoped that the next auction will be some time in the spring of next year, to be followed by a fourth and final sale in the fall.

D. M.

## *Notes on Publications*

THE 1964 CHRISTMAS BOOK, *Diseños of California Ranchos, Maps of 37 Land Grants, 1822-1846*, will be an exciting addition to the libraries not only of those who love the study of California's beginnings, but also of those bibliophiles who value the superlative craftsmanship that is so consistently exemplified by the products of

## Quarterly News-Letter

the Grabhorn Press. This book is in part a history, in part a book for reference and consultation; it is a contribution to the social, economic, and geographical record of California; and it is a magnificent work of graphic art. It presents for the first time in full size and color, reproductions of contemporary maps, *diseños*, of the ranchos of Mexican California.

A *diseño* is a sketch map, which was required by Mexican law to be submitted to the government with each petition for a grant of land. Some *diseños* were carefully prepared, and correspond accurately to the areas that they were intended to represent; others were highly stylized; and some were so crudely drawn as to be barely recognizable. They were rendered in color and in black and white—in pencil, ink, crayon, and watercolor. One finds in all of them a delightful freshness and vitality, and a new view of pastoral California.

The original *diseños*, or copies of them, ultimately became a part of the private land claim records of the United States District Court in San Francisco, which were recently entrusted to the Bancroft Library for safekeeping. It is from this archive, now at the University of California, that examples were selected, on the basis of pictorial interest and geographical distribution. Each reproduction is accompanied by a sketch based on modern topographic maps, and by an explanatory essay, both by Robert H. Becker, Assistant Director of the Bancroft Library.

Because of the great technical difficulty in the production of this magnificent volume, and the immense amount of handwork involved, only 400 copies will be for sale. Therefore, in view of the heavy demand anticipated for the book, we urge that all members *without standing orders* send in their requests immediately upon receiving the announcement. After standing orders have been filled, all requests will be taken care of on a strictly first-come, first-served basis. It is most unlikely that any second copies will be available, but if a few should remain after all first-copy orders have been filled, a drawing will be held at the club's offices. The price of the book will be \$55.00 (plus \$2.20 sales tax to all California residents).

### *New Sustaining Member*

The two classifications of membership above Regular Memberships are Patron Memberships, \$100 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$25 a year. The following has joined the club as a Sustaining Member:

DR. E. E. COLEMAN

Long Beach

# The Book Club of California

## *Elected to Membership*

The following have been elected since the publication of the Fall *News-Letter*:

| <i>Name</i>               | <i>Address</i>   | <i>Sponsor</i>            |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Vasilios B. Choulos       | San Francisco    | Membership Committee      |
| Dr. E. E. Coleman         | Long Beach       | Jacob Zeitlin             |
| Dr. Robert Griswold       | Stockton         | Kerwin Whitnah            |
| Wallace Hebbard           | Santa Barbara    | Oscar Lewis               |
| Harry Hill, Jr.           | Los Angeles      | David Magee               |
| Edgar N. Kierulff         | San Francisco    | Oscar Lewis               |
| Arthur P. Pacheco         | Mountain View    | Donald Fleming            |
| Maurice Read              | Sacramento       | Membership Committee      |
| Mrs. J. Terrell Scott     | San Diego        | Amy Wormser               |
| Mrs. Horace J. Stevens    | Tustin           | Nadine Newbegin Oppenheim |
| Dr. Fred M. Tetzlaff      | San Francisco    | Mrs. Perry Biestman       |
| Mr. and Mrs. Don Tibbitts | Kentfield        | Membership Committee      |
| David Van Riper           | Santa Barbara    | David Magee               |
| Coolie Verner             | Victoria, B. C.  | David Magee               |
| Elmira College Library    | Elmira, New York | Membership Committee      |

## *Serendipity*

ALL TOO INFREQUENTLY there comes along a hand-produced book with a text which deeply stimulates the collector of significant literature tastefully printed. Just published is *The Passionate Pirate* by Norman H. Strouse: the first book to be written on the life and publishing career of Thomas Bird Mosher of Portland, Maine. Mosher's first book, George Meredith's *Modern Love*, was issued in 1891, the same year William Morris produced his first book at the Kelmscott Press. Both men were attempting to raise the level of printing and publishing through carefully selected texts presented in an attractive format, with the aid of hand set type, special handmade paper, graceful margins, and suitable bindings—all this blessed by unusually careful craftsmanship. Both men, in their own countries, were instrumental in the revival of fine printing. Although Mosher is not well-known among the newer collectors, his 444 volumes produced between 1891 and 1923 brought him the praise and personal friendship of writers, artists, and collectors throughout the world. Bruce Rogers, who designed for Mosher as early as 1895, called him "the Aldus of the nineteenth century." Mosher was also an early friend and advisor of Robert Frost.

## Quarterly News-Letter

Mr. Strouse, one of the club's most devoted members, has studied, collected, and lectured on Thomas Bird Mosher for thirty-five years. He heads the world's largest advertising agency, and is also a noted bibliophile; and for many years he has operated his own private press. His story of Mosher is presented in a remarkably satisfying manner: the facts are complete (including a check list of titles); it is eminently readable; and throughout is the personal romance of collecting.

Especially noteworthy are the physical aspects of *The Passionate Pirate*. It is a truly dedicated hand-production by one man: Henry Morris at his Bird & Bull Press, 321 Elm Avenue, North Hills, Pennsylvania. First, he made the all-rag paper by hand (the sheets are watermarked with an anchor and dolphin device which was Mosher's press-mark); then the type was set, using Janson primarily; the paper was dampened for printing; and finally he completed the binding, with the sheets handsewn on tape and quarter-bound in Nigerian goatskin, with special patterned paper sides. The edition consists of 200 copies, octavo in size, of which 75 are for sale at \$20.00.



THE SACRAMENTO BOOK COLLECTORS CLUB announces, as their publication number 6, the *Narrative of William Robinson Grimshaw*. (This volume replaces *The History of the Sacramento Union*, which was previously announced as the club's publication number 6.)

In February 1848, William Robinson Grimshaw signed on as ordinary seaman at New York on a vessel "under charter to the government to convey stores and supplies to the U.S. Squadron on the coast of California." Sailing around the Horn, he finally arrived at Monterey in August 1848. Jumping ship at Monterey, he stowed away on the *Anita*, a naval vessel, and in time arrived in San Francisco. Here he was fortunate enough to meet Sam Brannan, who offered him employment as bookkeeper in his store at Sutter's Fort. This offer was accepted by Grimshaw.

Although only twenty-two years of age at the time of his arrival in California, Grimshaw was articulate and a very keen observer. There was little that escaped his notice. In 1872, Hubert Howe Bancroft asked him to write his reminiscences, and the narrative he produced, which is here presented for the first time, prompted Bancroft to say in his *Pioneer Register and Index*, "This is not only an interesting sketch of his own life and adventures, but one of the best

# The Book Club of California

accounts extant of the events of '48-'50 in the Sacramento Region." Here will be found one of the very few accounts of the methods used by those trading with the Indians, together with a fairly complete list of those engaged in this trade, methods of wagon and pack transportation, a full account of the trial of "Philosopher " Charles E. Pickett for the murder of Isaac Alderman, as well as the mores and sights and sounds of Sacramento and the surrounding country.

William Robinson Grimshaw's narrative is edited with preface, notes and index by James R. K. Kantor, Archivist, The Library, University of California. It will have a map by Marvin Spohn showing the country traveled by Grimshaw after landing at San Francisco, together with a photograph of Grimshaw taken not too long after he came to Sacramento.

The book is printed by Roger Levenson at the Tamalpais Press in an edition of 310 copies, of which 300 are for sale. It will be printed on Curtis Tweedweave text paper, a beautiful production of around eighty pages. Orders (accompanied by remittance and library requisitions) should be sent to the Sacramento Book Collectors Club, 7440 Alexander Court, Fair Oaks, California (95628). The book will sell for \$15.00, to which California residents should add 60¢ (4% sales tax), a total of \$15.60. (It might be noted that all previous publications of the Sacramento Book Collectors Club are now out of print and are regarded as scarce and desirable items of Californiana.)



AT A BANQUET held at the California Historical Society on September 25, George Hammond (a former director of the Book Club) received the Henry R. Wagner Memorial Award for his edition of the Thomas O. Larkin papers. Speakers at the awards banquet included Lawrence Clark Powell, J. S. Holliday and Amadeo Tommasini.



ON OCTOBER 1, the San Francisco Public Library dedicated its Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at a gala ceremony. Among the Book Club members who played a prominent role on this occasion were: Mrs. Carl Stern, Chairman of the Friends of the Public Library; Nat Schmulowitz, donor of the

## Quarterly News-Letter

Schmulowitz Collection of Wit and Humor; William Holman, City Librarian; and James D. Hart, whose keynote address appears in this issue of the *Quarterly*. William Ramirez is head of the new department, which includes (in addition to the Schmulowitz Collection) a variety of incunabula, private press books, and rare Californiana, as well as the Louis Lurie Theater Collection, the Eric Hoffer papers, and the Richard Harrison Calligraphy Collection. The department, which is located on the third floor of the main library building, is open to the public from 1 to 9 on weekdays and from 1 to 6 on Saturdays. Book Club members will find it well worth a visit.



PERHAPS it is sheer coincidence, or perhaps elections have turned printers' minds toward politics—whatever the reason, the club has received during the last month two productions on the subject of political freedom. The first is Judge Learned Hand's address, "The Spirit of Liberty," which has been attractively printed in two colors by club member Leonard Bahr at his Adagio Press (19972 Lochmoor Drive, Harper Woods, Michigan). The colophon of this pamphlet notes that "375 copies were patiently sewn by Ann Bahr."

The second work on this subject consists of a group of six broadsides on "Principles of Freedom" designed by Hermann Zapf. Mr. Zapf, who was the subject of a Book Club exhibition in 1953, is world-renowned as a calligrapher and type-designer. The series contains quotations from the Book of Common Prayer, Kant, Hegel, Salvador de Madariaga, Somerset Maugham and Wendell Willkie. Mr. Zapf has contributed an explanatory note to each broadside describing how he fitted the typography or calligraphy to the text. This highly commendable series has been issued free of charge, as a public service, by the Scott Paper Company (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19113).



ON OCTOBER 15-17 the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (Northern California Chapter) played host at an Antiquarian Book Fair held at the Sheraton-Palace, San Francisco. Thirty-six exhibitors, including many from the east coast and a couple from England, showed their wares (valued at a con-

# The Book Club of California

servative estimate at half a million dollars) to an appreciative audience of San Franciscans and guests from other parts of the country. Some 2,300 visitors attended the function during the three days the rare books, manuscripts, maps, etc. were on view. All items were for sale. This was the Fourth Antiquarian Book Fair to be held in California, and it is now an annual event, held alternately in San Francisco and Los Angeles.



*The Fair Will Case* by Kenneth M. Johnson is number four in the series of Famous California Trials published by Dawson's Book Shop in Los Angeles. This book is a detailed account of the history of contention over the will of James G. Fair, the "Bonanza King," whose death in 1894 set in motion a series of sensational litigations over the proper distribution of his vast wealth. The book is printed with appropriate Victorian flourishes by Richard J. Hoffman in an edition of 225 copies. (85 pages; \$8.50).



YE GALLEON PRESS is owned and operated by Glen Adams, a Book Club member who lives and prints in Fairfield, Washington. We have just received the fifth production of the press, a 23-page booklet entitled *Japanese Wrecks Stranded and Picked up Adrift in the North Pacific Ocean*, by Charles Wolcott Brooks. This is a reprinting (partly by offset) of a lecture originally given at the California Academy of Sciences in 1875. It is now available in a limited edition of 400 copies from the Old Book Home, Box 7777 Rosewood Station, Spokane, Washington 99208. (\$3.50)



LOST AND FOUND DEPARTMENT: A lady's black umbrella was left in the club rooms at the November 9th Open House.

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